REV. DONALD WAHLGREN FUNERAL SERVICE INCLUDING PRAYERS WITH FAMILY AND COMMITTAL SERVICE



June 1, 1924 – September 10, 2016

PRAYERS WITH FAMILY

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH GOWRIE, IA

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy. Lord have mercy.

PSALM 121

¹I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help to come?
²My help comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth.
³He will not let your foot be moved and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.
⁴Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep;
⁵the LORD himself watches over you; the LORD is your shade at your right hand,
⁶so that the sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
⁷The LORD shall preserve you from all evil;

⁸The LORD shall watch over your going out and your coming in,

from this time forth forevermore.

it is he who shall keep you safe.

SCRIPTURE

A Reading from Deuteronomy: The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are God's everlasting arms. (Deut. 33:27a)

A reading from St. John: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand.

My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." (John 10:27-29)

PRAYER

Almighty God, with reverence and affection we remember before you all our departed friends and relatives, but especially our beloved brother Don. Keep us in union with them here through faith and love toward you, that hereafter we may enter into your presence and be numbered with those who serve you and look upon your face in glory everlasting, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Blessed is the kingdom of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life. In the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

FUNERAL SERVICE ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH GOWRIE, IA

PRI	ELI	UD	E

Don's family will place the pall.

When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

CHILDREN OF THE HEAVENLY FATHER.....#781

Children of the heav'nly Father safely in his bosom gather; nestling bird nor star in heaven such a refuge e'er was given.

God his own doth tend and nourish, in his holy courts they flourish. From all evil things he spares them, in his mighty arms he bears them.

Neither life nor death shall ever from the Lord his children sever; unto them his grace he showeth, and their sorrows all he knoweth. Though he giveth or he taketh, God his children ne'er forsaketh; his the loving purpose solely to preserve them pure and holy.

GREETING AND PRAYER page 280

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you today our brother, Don. We thank you for giving him to us to know and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on earth. In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Give us faith to see that death has been swallowed up in the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that we may live in confidence and hope until, by your call, we are gathered to our heavenly home in the company of all your saints; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Welcome and Announcements (Remarks by Curtis and Philip)

Marilyn will read the Readings and lead the 23rd Psalm

Reading: Isaiah 25:6-9

The first reading is from Isaiah, chapter 25.

In this reading Isaiah offers a vision of a great feast at which all God's people will be gathered to be glad and rejoice for all eternity.

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-matured wines strained clear. ⁷ And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; ⁸ he will swallow up

death for ever. Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. ⁹ It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

PSALM 23 ELW page 339+

- ¹The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.
- ²The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.
- ³You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.
- ⁴Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- ⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.
- ⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

READING: Romans 8:31-39

The second reading is from Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 8.

In this reading Paul reminds us that nothing, not even death, can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him

who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

GOSPEL: John 14:1-6

The Holy Gospel according to John, chapter 14. Glory to you, O God.

Jesus comforts his disciples, in the midst of their grief, and encourages them to trust in God and him.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust God, trust also in me. ²In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to the place where I am going." ⁵Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" ⁶Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

NEARER MY GOD TO THEEInsert

Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee! E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me, still all my song shall be, nearer, my God, to thee; nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

Though like the wanderer, the sun gone down, darkness be over me, my rest a stone; yet in my dreams I'd be

nearer, my God, to thee;
nearer my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

There let the way appear, steps unto heaven;
all that thou sendest me, in mercy given;
angels to beckon me
nearer, my God, to thee;
nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

Then, with my waking thoughts bright with thy praise,
out of my stony griefs Bethel I'll raise;
so by my woes to be
nearer, my God, to thee;
nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

Or if, on joyful wing cleaving the sky, sun, moon, and stars forgot, upward I fly, still all my song shall be, nearer, my God, to thee; nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

SERMON

Thank you Curtis and Phil for sharing what you did about your father. He made me promise not to talk about him at this service, which I'll try to respect, although not totally. I'm certain he'll forgive me for the little I do. However, surprisingly, he did say it was alright for one of you to say something about him. Thank you.

Some of you may be wondering why I'm standing here. Usually I'm over there.

A number of years ago, Don and Marjorie were on their way out of church when Don said, "Thank you for your sermon. I got a lot out of it."

To which I replied, "Thank you."

Don said, "I always get something out of your sermons." "Well, thank you very much!" I exclaimed.

Then Don said, "Even when they're not very good, I look at Jesus in the window and am reminded that Jesus is always with me, caring for me as a shepherd cares for a lamb. So, I always know I'm going to get something out of your sermons."

I can't remember what I said after that.

Don and I enjoyed teasing each other. It was one of the ways we loved each other.

I'm standing here because if you're not getting something out of my sermon, you can at least keep your eyes on Jesus and be reminded that he's always with you. For Don, it was always all about Jesus.

For those of you who both knew Don and know me, you know there wasn't much we agreed on when it came to interpreting scripture or theology; however, we both believed Jesus is Lord and we should love others. That was enough to keep us going down the road together and, even more, provide a foundation for the deep love and respect we had for each other as brothers in Christ regardless of our differences.

It's becoming more common these days when a person dies to have a "Celebration of Life" instead of a funeral or memorial service. Don and I occasionally talked about this change. It seemed to both of us that "Celebrations of Life" often served as a means to blunt the harsh reality of death that lies ahead of each of us and the grief we usually have to bear when someone we love dies. It seemed to both of us that calling what we're about today a "Celebration of Life" is yet another way we have of denying the power of death.

Death is powerful. Even at the end of a long, well-lived life death can leave us grieving. Even though I'm grateful for my brother that the struggles and troubles

of this life have passed and he's been freed to continue his journey into the great mystery that lies beyond this life, I still grieve. I'll miss him and what we shared.

As Christians, we take the power of death seriously. Regardless of our faith, we know the grief we feel when someone we love dies and the anxiety and fear we often feel when we consider our own deaths. While it's right and good to celebrate the lives of those who have died; celebrating their lives does little to soothe the grief we feel when someone we love dies, or the anxiety and fear we often feel when we consider our own deaths.

When Lazarus died – he was a close friend of Jesus – and Jesus saw the grief of those who loved Lazarus, Jesus was greatly disturbed in Spirit and deeply moved. As they took Jesus to Lazarus' tomb, Jesus began to weep. The Jews said, "See how he loved him!" (*John 11:35-36*) Jesus wept because he loved Lazarus; and when someone we love dies the natural response is to grieve.

When Jesus was faced with his own death, "he began to be distressed and agitated and said to his closest friends, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake."" (Mark 14:33-34)

Death is powerful. Even at the end of a long life well-lived, death can leave us filled with grief. The apostle Paul considered death the last enemy. (1 Corinthians 15:26)

While it's indeed right and good to celebrate Don's life – what a faithful servant of our Lord Jesus Christ – that's not what Don wanted us to be about this morning. Instead, Don wanted us to celebrate the love of God in Christ Jesus for all God's people. There was nothing more important for Don than the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

First, we believe the reason we're here is because of God's love. Not just here this morning, but here at all. The author of First John writes, "God is love." (1

John 4:8, 16) That is one of the fundamental theological affirmations of Scripture: God is love. Because God is love, God created all that exists because love always needs an object, love cannot exist by and for itself. The universe and everything in it, including us, exists because God is love.

Second, the universe and everything in it are gifts from God, but the greatest of God's gifts to us is love.

When Paul considers God's gifts he writes, "Strive for the greater gifts. ...now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love." (*I Corinthians 12:31; 13:13*)

The greatest of God's gifts is love and, as Christians, we believe we see God's love most fully in Jesus. Jesus embodied what it means to obey the greatest commandment, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and you shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no greater commandment." (Mark 12:30-31)

As Christians, we believe there is no one who has more fully revealed the love of God than Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ loved and trusted God and because he did he proclaimed the good news that the kingdom of God is with us and called us to open our eyes and ears to see and hear God among us.

Jesus Christ loved and trusted God and because he did he loved and forgave those who were ashamed and guilty; healed the sick; befriended the lonely; fed the hungry; freed those who were captive to their demons; raised the dead; and gave hope to those who lived in despair.

Jesus Christ loved and trusted God and because he did he was willing to endure

the suffering and god-forsaken death of a cross.

Indeed, there has never been one who more fully revealed the love of God for us than Jesus Christ.

However, as fully as Jesus revealed the love of God for us in his love for, and trust in God; and his love of others; if Jesus' story would have ended with his death on the cross we would be left with our grief and despair. But his story did not end on the cross.

On that first Easter morning, a few of the women who followed Jesus, along with a handful of men, were blessed to hear that glorious proclamation, "Christ is Risen!"

Those three joyous words changed everything. If Christ is risen then death no longer has power over us. The last enemy has been defeated and we are free to live... loving and trusting God and loving others. Death no longer has power over us. In the end, God's love is the greatest power in the universe.

In one of the most powerful passages in all scripture, Paul bears witness to this when he writes, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (*Romans 8:38*)

This is what our brother Don would have us celebrate; not his life, but Jesus' life, and the love of God revealed in Jesus for Don and all God's children.

Don was a faithful follower of Jesus Christ because he knew the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ, a love that empowered him to faithfully love and trust God, and love others; a love that blessed him with comfort and hope even as he faced his own death; a love that sustained him in life and now sustains him in

death. This is what our brother would have us celebrate today.

If you want to celebrate and honor our brother's life, do so by trusting in the love of God revealed to us in Jesus Christ. Give your hearts to Jesus. Love and trust God. Love others. And, most important of all, remember that Jesus is always with you caring for you as a shepherd cares for a lamb.

Now may the peace that passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus until we are gathered with Don and all those who have gone before us in celebrating God's amazing love for all eternity. Amen.

A MIGHTY FORTRESS.....#504

A mighty fortress is our God,
a sword and shield victorious;
he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod
and wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe
has sworn to work us woe!
With craft and dreadful might
he arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.
No strength of ours can match his might!
We would be lost, rejected.
But now a champion comes to fight,
whom God himself elected.
You ask who this may be?
The Lord of hosts is he!

Though hordes of devils fill the land all threat'ning to devour us,

Christ Jesus, mighty Lord,

He holds the field victorious.

God's only Son, adored.

we tremble not, unmoved we stand; they cannot overpow'r us.

Let this world's tyrant rage; in battle we'll engage!

His might is doomed to fail;

God's judgment must prevail!

One little word subdues him.

God's Word forever shall abide, no thanks to foes, who fear it; for God himself fights by our side with weapons of the Spirit.

Were they to take our house, goods, honor, child, or spouse, though life be wrenched away, they cannot win the day.

The kingdom's ours forever!

APOSTLES' CREED.....page 282

Living together in trust and hope we confess our faith.

I believe in God, the Father almighty,

creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,

born of the virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried;

he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;

he ascended into heaven,

he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS

Let us pray.

God, the generations rise and pass away before you. You are the strength of those who labor; you are the rest of the blessed dead. We rejoice in the company of your saints. We remember all who have lived in faith, all who have peacefully died, and especially those most dear to us who rest in you... Give us in time our portion with those who have trusted in you and have striven to do your holy will. To your name, with the Church on earth and the Church in heaven, we ascribe all honor and glory, now and forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

COMMENDATION page 283

Let us commend our beloved brother Don to the mercy of God, our maker and redeemer

Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant Don.

Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light. Amen.

Let us go forth in peace,

in the name of Christ. Amen.

JOYFUL, JOYFUL, WE ADORE THEE.....#836

Joyful, joyful we adore thee,
God of glory, Lord of love!
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee,
praising thee, their sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
drive the gloom of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day.

All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heav'n reflect thy rays, stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flow'ry meadow, flashing sea, chanting bird, and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,

wellspring of the joy of living, ocean-depth of happy rest! Thou our Father, Christ our brother, all who live in love are thine; teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine!

POSTLUDE

COMMITTAL SERVICE ELFSBORG LUTHERAN CEMETERY POMEROY, IA

SCRIPTURE

I called to the Lord in my distress; the Lord answered by setting me free. (*Psalm 118:5*)

It is better to rely on the Lord than to put any trust in flesh. It is better to rely on the Lord than to put any trust in rulers. (*Psalm 118:8-9*)

Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them; I will offer thanks to the Lord. "This is the gate of the Lord; he who is righteous may enter." (*Psalm 19-20*) None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. (*Romans 14:7-8*)

"I am the resurrection and the life," says the Lord; "he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die." (John 11:25-26a)

PRAYER

Almighty God, by the death and burial of Jesus, your anointed, you have destroyed death and sanctified the graves of all your saints. Keep our brother, whose body we now lay to rest, in the company of all your saints and, at the last, raise him/her up to share with all your faithful people the endless joy and peace won through the glorious resurrection of Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

READINGS

And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be also; if anyone serves me, the Father will honor him." (*John 12:23-26*)

Lo! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in a victory." "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:51-57)

COMMITTAL

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to almighty God our brother Don, and we commit his body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. The Lord bless him and keep him. The Lord makes his face shine on him and be gracious to him. The Lord look upon him with favor and give him + peace.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, by your death you took away the sting of death. Grant to us, your servants, so to follow in faith where you have led the way, that we may at length fall asleep peacefully in you and wake in your likeness; to you, the author and giver of life, be all honor and glory, now and forever. Amen.

Rest eternal grant Don, O Lord; and let light perpetual shine upon him.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

In the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us go from this place trusting in God's amazing love for us and, as we do so, may we be blessed with the comfort and hope that sustain our beloved brother Don all his life. Amen.

Pastor Donald V. Wahlgren Obituary

Pastor Donald V. Wahlgren, 92, of Gowrie passed away Saturday, September 10th, 2016 at the Marian Home in Fort Dodge. Funeral services will be 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, September 14th, 2016 at Zion Lutheran Church, Gowrie with Pastor Jim Davis officiating.

Burial will be at Elfsborg Lutheran Church Cemetery in Pomeroy, IA.

Friends may call after 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 13th, 2016 at Palmer Funeral Home, Gowrie.

Donald is survived by his wife, Marjorie; children, Curtis Wahlgren of Philadelphia, PA; Peter (Betsy) Wahlgren of Wheaton, IL; D. Philip (Marilyn) Wahlgren of Greene; Mary B. Wahlgren of Fort Dodge; and five grandchildren, Kareem, Jameela, Anthony, Austin, and Autumn.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Gust and Lula (Holland) Wahlgren; daughter, Carol Wahlgren; brother, Paul Wahlgren; and sister, Elayne Palmer.

Donald Wahlgren was born June 1, 1924 in Palmer, Iowa. Donald was raised and educated in Palmer, graduating from Palmer High School. Donald then attended and graduated from Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls. Donald served in the United States Army from 1943 to 1946. He then taught and coached for one year in Ringsted. After, Donald spent one year at Luther College. On June 2, 1950 Donald was united in marriage to Marjorie Jorth at Bethany Lutheran Church in Spencer, Iowa. The couple then went overseas from 1950 till 1962 to teach at a Mission School in Nigeria. When the couple returned to Iowa, Donald completed his graduate work at Luther Seminary. Donald and Marjorie served many different Lutheran parishes in Iowa for 26 years. In 1989, Donald semi-retired in Gowrie. Donald was a member of Zion Lutheran Church.

Memorials may be left to ELCA Church World Mission or World Hunger LWR.

